

[Morgan's Raid as Mr. Johnson Remembers]

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Morgan's Raid

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MORGAN'S RAID AS MR. JOHNSON REMEMBERED IT

Ref. (A) Personal Interview with Mr. Johnson

Mr. Johnson was working at a neighbor's where he was hired whom the rumor came that Morgan and his terrible men were crossing the river at [Corydon?]. There was a general stir of excitement in the community. This was approximately three miles from Lexington on the Paris Crossing road.

That July morning was very foggy, Mr. Johnson was plowing corn when he heard the clump clump of horses feet in the distance. His first thought was of Morgan, so leaving his work he went to the fence where he first saw the gray uniforms of the Confederates coming into view. He then put his horse in the barn and started to his father's home a mile away to warn them to hide their horse. This was the last time he ever saw his old gray mare as Mr. John said. "You can imagine the thrill to a boy of sixteen summers. The temptation was so strong to see the horses that I hurried across the field to the old Paris road, dropping my shoes, I stood on the topmost rail on that July morning in my bare feet and heard the jangle and clanking of arms. The gray figures of Morgan's men appeared out of the distance. They showed the strain of a hurried and harassed march; both men and beast were weary. Four of the men stopped before me perched on the fence and said, 'son take these canteen and fill them with water'. I didn't refuse but hurried across the road to Mr. Alexander's Robinson's well where two or three other boys were drawing water for the Raider's men with a windlass. The well was wide and only about nine feet deep. As

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soon as I filled my canteens I passed them among the men and kept returning for more water until the well was dry. After this short period of service we were mustered out; and Morgan, the raider, with his men went their way with their jangling and clanking of arms to disappear in the horizon toward old Paris.”

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There were some three thousand soldiers in the Confederate cavalry. They were gentlemanly and represented the best manhood of Kentucky and their native states. [??] Of course in war and in that large a crowd there would be some unpleasant things, but on the whole the men were polite. Whenever they saw a horse they wanted they exchanged their worn out horse for it usually with the suggestion of “Let's Swap, I think you can plow all right with this horse”. Many of the horses left were really better than the ones taken but were worn out and many had sore backs.

Mr. Johnson's father was riding along with Mr. Buckston, a Southern sympathizer who had a valuable horse, when the leader said, “I'll need your horse,” then fingering Mr. Buckston's gold watch chain which extended across his waist, he said, “I can also relieve you of this watch and chain.” With as good a grace as he could muster for he belonged to the knights of the Golden Circle, Mr. Buckston crawled from his horse and meekly handed over his watch.

The same evening Hobson's men came through the country hard on [Morgan's?] tracks. In his band there were five thousand Union men. They foraged off the main road in small [groups?] for two or three miles. They drove down the land to Mr. Johnson's home; as they reached the gate to the yard, they halted and drew their guns. The memory of those armed soldiers was still very vivid to Mr. Johnson. For awhile the family was very frightened with so many guns pointing directly at the house. Mrs Johnson had done considerable baking for Sunday, among the things were several pies, a large corn pone which was several inches in diameter and very deep, all of these were [crammed?] into a sack by Hobson's men. To bake these pones, hot coals were raked in front of the fire places, the dough

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placed in an oven or run with a tight cover and red hot coals placed on top of it. This bread was much better two or three days after it was baked.

There was no difference in the foraging of the two armies, but if Hobson took a horse he left a note which was redeemed by the govt. after 3 the war.

When Mr. Johnson was watching the Morgan men pass by he was attracted noticeably by a white horse with spots on it as large as your hand; he was asked, "Do you know that horse?" "Yes, I think it belongs to Mr. Hardy who lives down the road," he answered.

"Well. I don't know who it belongs to. I didn't see the owner when I got it out of the stables", answered the Confederate.